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Fifty-second session
Agenda item 61
QUESTION OF CYPRUS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Letter dated 24 November 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to bring to your attention the following:

While the Cyprus Government ardently protects places of worship belonging to all faiths in Cyprus, Turkey has not so far complied with its obligations under international law and United Nations resolutions on this issue. The most recent violation has been the erection of a mosque in Kythrea on land belonging to Maria Nicolaidou Longinou, a Greek Cypriot refugee now living in the free areas. Moreover, the mosque being built occupies a part of the ground of St. Marina Church which adjoins the property of Mrs. Longinou.

The Turkish occupied area of Cyprus contains not only a large part of the island's rich archaeological heritage but also churches, monasteries and other religious sites and monuments which are subjected daily to severe and extreme destruction of unprecedented extent and proportions. I take this opportunity to point out that this usurpation of private land and the looting of the cultural and religious heritage of Cyprus has been continuing since 1974, with the result that over 100 churches and monasteries have been looted and plundered of their sacred treasures.

Unfortunately, the efforts so far of the various international organizations and leading personalities in art and culture have not resulted in the prevention of the destruction and wanton exportation of Cyprus' heritage which forms part of the religious and cultural patrimony of the world. Given the new international environment which places protection and safeguarding of human rights, including cultural ones, at the centre of United Nations activities, we reiterate the request that necessary steps be taken to respond

more effectively to the challenge of putting an end to such anachronistic policies by Turkey.

I would be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Sotos ZACKHEOS
Ambassador,
Permanent Representative

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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION

IMPROVING THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Letter dated 19 November 1997 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Member States are already aware that the question of non-payment of arrears by some Governments of their assessed contributions to the United Nations budget has become an increasingly serious matter. The issue recently has become more acute since, contrary to expectations, the Congress of the United States of America was not able to reach a positive decision with regard to the payment of United States arrears.

Member States are also aware that, in the past few years, shortfalls in the regular budget have been met through borrowing from peacekeeping funds. I consider that this practice cannot become a regular recourse for overcoming budgetary difficulties caused by non-payment of arrears.

I believe that Member States should fully consider the implications of the current situation for the Organization. I therefore would be grateful if the High-level Open-ended Working Group on the Financial Situation of the United Nations could be convened by you for this purpose and to explore options for ensuring timely payment by Member States of their assessments. The Working Group might report on its recommendations before the end of the current session of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

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